

MASMID



JUNE 1931

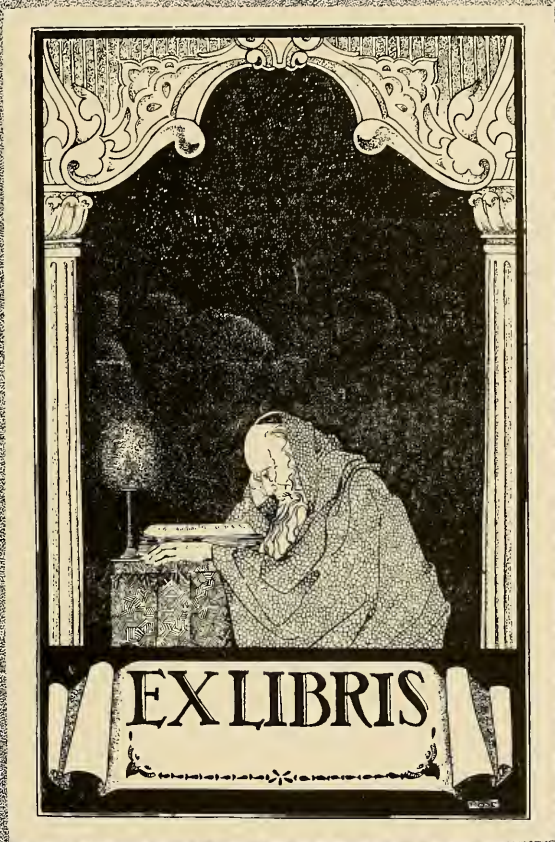
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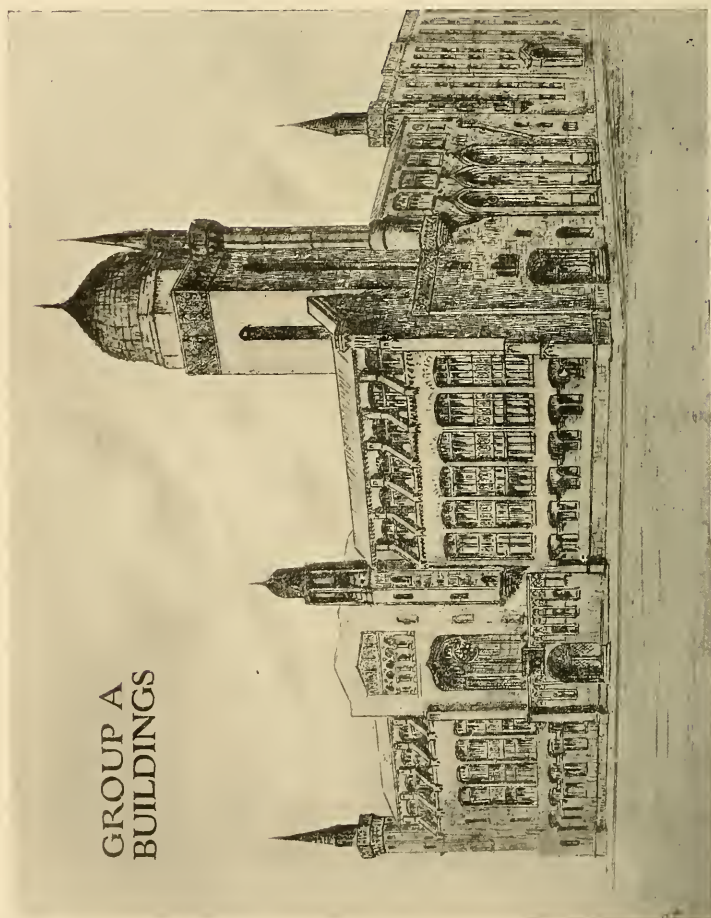
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GROUP A
BUILDINGS

Yeshiva College

THE YESHIVA AND YESHIVA COLLEGE has been located in the City of New York more than twenty-five years. Three years ago, when it completed its present edifice at a cost of Three and a half million dollars, the University of the State of New York sanctioned the establishment of its College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It is therefore in the unique position of being the only Jewish College in America, which has the authority to confer bachelor and doctor degrees upon its graduates.

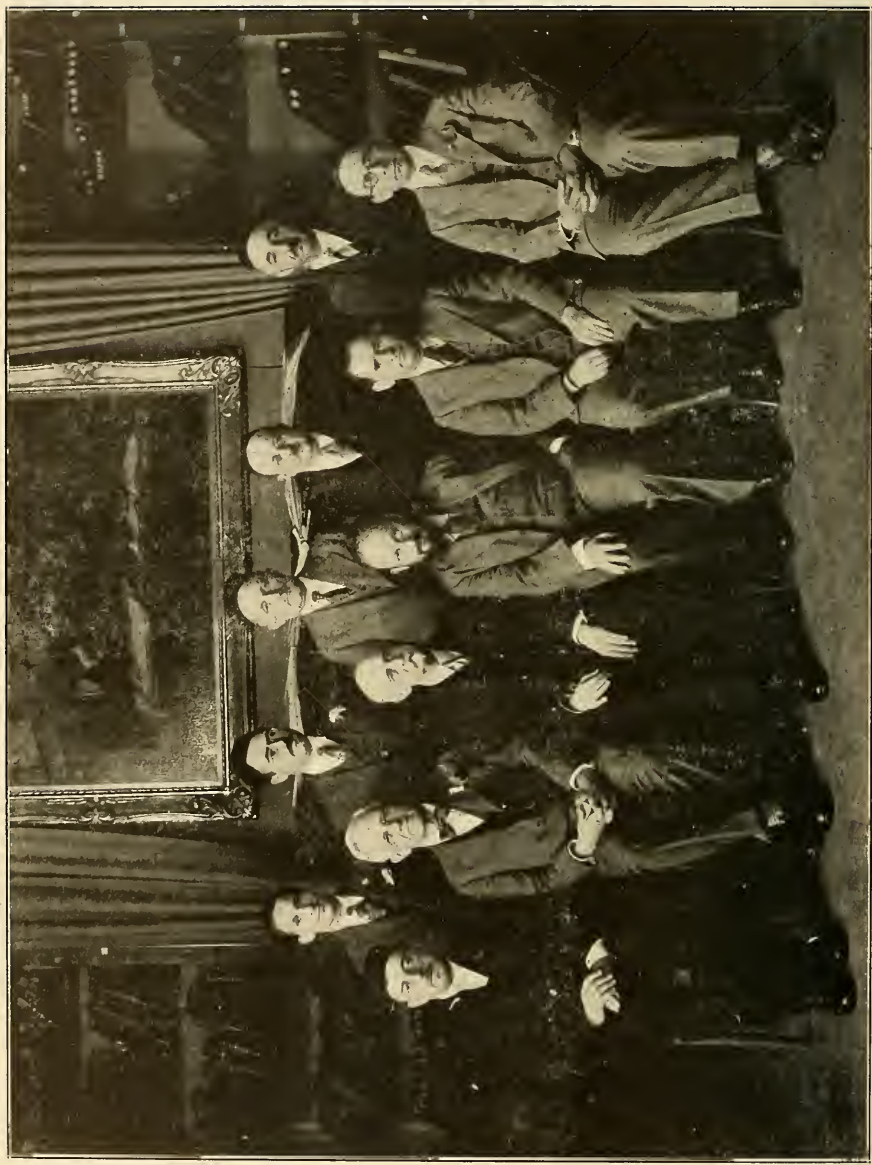
The aim and purpose of the Yeshiva College is to blend in its students a harmonious understanding and appreciation of Jewish tradition and culture with modern life in its various fields of art, science and social service. The College aims at the inculcation of an abiding consciousness of the high ideals and the spiritual heritage of the Jewish people, and the development of both intellect and character through the pursuit of those humanizing studies by which life as a whole may be elevated and enriched.

In no way a rival of other colleges, the Yeshiva College further aims to make real what has always been the Yeshiva's ideal, namely, the development of young men who go forth in the world as rabbis, teachers, social service workers or as business and professional men and who will be the standard bearers of moral and spiritual leadership in the communities in which they live.

The Yeshiva and Yeshiva College owns considerable land surrounding its present structures, and as soon as sufficient funds have been raised, additional buildings will be erected. We wish to make it possible to accommodate the many students who are seeking a harmonious blending of Jewish and secular cultures which the Yeshiva College offers.

The Yeshiva Endowment Foundation, Inc., is chartered under the laws of the State of New York to receive and to perpetually administer Trusts for the benefit of the Yeshiva and Yeshiva College. Trust Funds are safely invested in the manner provided by the laws of the State of New York for the Investment of Trust Funds. The principal of the Fund is always kept intact and only the income thereof is devoted to the purposes intended by the Settlers. Valuable rights and privileges for those creating trust funds are provided for in the charter and by-laws of the Yeshiva Endowment Foundation, Inc., and will be sent upon request.

Trusts can be created for many different purposes. No amount is too small to begin a trust fund. American Jews have now the same opportunity and obligation to fulfill for Jewish life in America that our Gentile neighbors have accomplished for the Endowments of their colleges.



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FACULTY

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M A S M I D

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Nationalism and Religion

By HUGO MANTEL

When the Uganda plan was brought up at the Zionist Congress in 1904 at Basle, the delegates were divided into two camps. The one was unhesitatingly in favor of establishing colonies anywhere, as long as Jewish economic conditions would thereby be mitigated. The other was opposed to any permanent colonization outside of Palestine. Even a temporary abode was objected to lest it might divert attention from the ideal of making Palestine the Jewish homeland.

This division may be said to have been based on the degree of influence that religion had on the various factions of Zionism. The Eastern Europeans, though they might have abandoned religion, were still under the spell of the hope for a Messiah who would lead the Jews to their ancient land. The Western Europeans had been less impressed with religion and they consequently felt no profound attachment to a strip of territory in Asia Minor. Their problem was Jewish suffering and they wished to solve it by settling the Jews in a distinct territory—regardless of its geographical position, though Palestine was preferred.

The conflict fortunately ended with a complete victory for the Eastern Europeans. Palestine remained the center of Jewish hopes and activities. Thus religion won over economic expediency.

But it was only in this respect that the influence of religion was supreme in the Zionist Organization. In almost all of the other aspects, religion remained disregarded. Religion, it was held, is a private matter; Zionism is concerned with the establishment of a national home for the Jews; the State cannot go hand in hand with the Synagogue. The European nations have shown the incompatibility of Church and State. The Church, it was claimed, is concerned with the other world, while the State deals with this world.

Time has shown the fallacy of this attitude. Zionist leaders have come to realize that Judaism cannot be divorced from Jewish nationalism. In this respect we are different from the European nations. They had to banish the Church from the affairs of the State, for while their political, economic and

social institutions had been the result of their natural development, religion had come to them from without. Among Jews, however, religion had always been the moving force. Their original problems were religio-moral ones; their political, social and economic institutions had been based upon religion. The Jewish state has never been separated from the Jewish religion.

Jewish nationalists, moreover, make their appeal for the sympathy of the world not a plea for mere preservation; the rejuvenation of the Jewish culture is their aim. The Jewish creative spirit is as youthful and as vigorous as ever; it is far from having had its final say. A national home, it is believed, will allow for a natural blossoming of this spirit.

Diaspora Jewry, too, will benefit by Jewish political independence in Palestine. Their prestige will rise both within and without. The healthy and spontaneous culture in Palestine will inspire Jews all over the world for greater creativeness.

Jewish nationalists, therefore, must take two things into consideration. In the first place, that Jewish personality has been religious in character. Religion has ever been the hub around which the wheel of Jewish history and culture has centered. Secondly, that whatever is lofty and noble in the Western religions has its roots in the Jewish religious expression. They must note, too, that as Western civilization is progressing on scientific and mechanical lines, it is more and more in need of religious inspiration. That the Jews have their great opportunity in providing for this need, needs no further discussion.

Moreover, we cannot overlook the fact that Jewish nationalism without Judaism has no future at all. We cannot, for one thing, gloss over the spiritual aspect of nationalism. That "G-d, the Torah, and Israel are united" is no mere maxim but an historic fact. A Jew cannot permanently rid himself of religion, try as he may. Jewish radicals have turned out more Ba'ale Tshuvah, complete or half-baked, than the radicals of any other people. And those that did not have the courage to avow their return publicly, showed an unusual amount of uneasiness.

The poet Heinrich Heine, who was probably as cosmopolitan in his views as any man could be, in the last few years of his life, felt the necessity for religion and expounded a system of Judaism which would pass today as conservative. Mendele Mocher Seforim, who for a lifetime had waged war on orthodoxy, was, during his last years, a devout religionist. Max Nordau, the great critic of European civilization during the last generation, famous for his agnosticism, was often discovered in his home enwrapped in Tallith reading the Bible. In our own days, there are at least two outstanding men who have left their radicalism, Dr. Nathan Birnbaum, whose keen mind had made him the leader of Jewish radical thought for decades, and who had adopted as his literary pseudonym the classical name of heretics—Acher—is now at the head of the organization of the orthodox Jews in Poland. In a lesser degree, Chaim Nachman Bialik, the famous national poet, recently surprised the Jewish world by issuing a call to Jews all over the world to remain steadfast to their religion. Not only great leaders have felt the lure of the soul of their people, religion; lesser lights, too, could not calmly withstand its call. Thus the Jewish editor of a communistic newspaper was reported to have been secretly putting on "Tephilin" on the day of his mother's "Jahrzeit". Religion among Jews is not acquired; it is inherited. To be religious is their fate.

Another factor which makes Jewish nationalism dependent upon tradition is a practical one. So long as Jews live among other peoples, they are in danger of assimilation. This danger can be overcome by no other force than by religion. Foremost leaders of Zionism have married outside of the Jewish fold. An orthodox Jew, however, though he may be opposed to the modern political Zionist efforts, is himself never exposed to assimilation; the Torah forbids the intermarriage of Jews and non-Jews.

A nationalistic Jew may or may not mingle with Jews; he may or may not give his children a Jewish education. But a traditional Jew must of necessity mingle with Jews very frequently and he must give his children a Jewish education. There are a thousand bonds that keep the religious Jew with his people. The few threads that hold the nationalist to Jewry are in constant dan-

ger of being severed.

It is, indeed, the slogan of the religious nationalist—the Land of Israel for the people of Israel according to the Torah of Israel—that fascinates us.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Students' Council, though still in its infancy, has shown justification for its existence. The college authorities have recognized it as the official voice of the students, communicated through it official school matters and discussed with it all matters pertaining to the welfare of the students. The Students' Council, has this year attempted to establish itself as the central organization for the promotion of extra curricula activities and the sponsoring of all student affairs.

We trust that our successors will continue the program begun this year in expanding the college library. We urge the next council to continue the practice of Inter-Collegiate debating begun this year. The success with which we met this year should serve as an incentive to future debates. It is needless to point out that the publication of the Masmid depends upon the existence of a central organization and a solicitous and energetic attitude on the part of this organization will assure the growth and development of the magazine.

It must be borne in mind, however, that in spite of all these propitious beginnings, the Students' Council can never reap any fair degree of success unless the students awake to the realization of the importance of the potentialities of the organization. We believe that the spirit of indifference that first marked the students' attitude towards the council has been considerably lessened; we hope it will have disappeared by the end of next year, when the first lap of our journey will be terminated. Naturally, efficient and conscientious representatives must be elected who will be capable of gaining the confidence of the student body. There must exist a spirit of harmony and co-operation, a complete readiness on the part of all concerned to give unselfish assistance when the occasion arises, a realization that a feeling of sincerity must characterize both sides. It is only then that the organization will succeed.

HYMAN MUSS,

President, the Council of the S. O. Y. C.

“The End of Days”

By ABRAHAM S. GUTERMAN

THE speculation as to the advent of the Messiah, and its attendant miracles, the resurrection of the dead, and the return of Jewish supremacy in the spiritual affairs of the world, is a very interesting side light of Jewish history. The almost universal pastime of Jewish scholars in all climes and all ages has been to read into certain cryptic and enigmatic scriptural texts definite numerical significances, voluminous calculations both mystic and mathematical which were finally twisted to fit some year in the Common Era. A natural consequence of this profuse speculation was that at various times men convinced themselves that they were Messiahs, destined to lead Israel back to the Promised Land, and to establish that visionary Utopia which legend has woven about the Messianic emancipation. In this rapid survey I shall discuss, first the forces behind these phenomena, second, the most important methods of calculation, third, the more outstanding computations, and fourth, the most famous pseudo-Messiahs.

The burning zeal for divining the advent of the Redeemer may be attributed to several factors. It was a combination of political aspirations, social emancipation, and religious and moral idealism. The Jews believed in the ultimate triumph of divine justice. They were firm in the faith that the dictum of God promising national rehabilitation was invariable, and indelibly inscribed on the scrolls of destiny. Their unendurable hardships kindled the desire for freedom and rest, for a haven of refuge where their harassed and lacerated bodies might find repose. An unquenchable love of life dominated their spirit and aroused the desire for autonomy in a land of their own.

Speculation was an insufficient bandage for their deep wounds, but a bandage it was, and though it healed only in parts, nevertheless it mollified in a measure the degree of their pain, and its balsam refreshed the hope in the hearts of the people. As the burdens and terrors, the persecutions and tribulations of life increased, the Jew looked frantically about for some glimmer of hope, some rationale for continuing a rather painful and un-

pleasant existence. The feeling that any day might bring the Messiah and an end to all his suffering filled him with the desire to live, so essential to the existence of a nation, and especially of a wandering nation. But he was unwilling to allow the advent of the Messiah to remain shrouded in mystery, to remain curtained behind the opaque veils of a divine promise. He groped about in the Scriptures and there by a great many methods he came to varied conclusions at different times and in different lands.

It would be well to review briefly the various methods of calculation employed by the scholars and rabbis. The first and most important source was the Book of Daniel. Several specific numbers of years are listed therein, all of them indefinite and puzzling. In chapter 12 we encounter the greater part of these mystic symbols in which are supposedly hidden the secret of the final redemption. Other scriptural texts scattered over the length and breadth of the Bible have also served as inspiration for speculative genius. Gematria or the assignment of a numerical significance to each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and the subsequent computations on this basis have been an important factor in many of the conclusions. Notarikon or the employment of each letter of a word in the Bible as a series of first letters for the words in an improvised sentence gave many a mystic an opportunity for mental gymnastics. Interpretation by the transposition of letters called Chiluf and the replacement of one letter by another called Temurah gave rise to many a startling prediction.

It was a perfectly natural reaction that calculators should take cognizance of the length of former exiles and by the comparison of characteristics and support of scriptural texts establish mathematical relations to ascertain the “end of days”. Even more influence in this field was wielded by the science of astrology with its vast mystic background and the deep-seated belief in the minds of many that the stars were an open book for those that could read their ethereal language. In earlier centuries, both by Biblical and Talmudical dicta, this science was unalterably

opposed, but as Arabic culture made its gradual impress on Jewish culture, astrology with its intricate and complicated means of divining the future gained considerable credence among Jews of the Middle Ages.

All of the vast number of calculators since the early centuries of the Common Era cannot enter so short a discussion. Let us rather review some of the most outstanding with a view to their methods and conclusions. One of the earliest of the long group is Judah Ha-Nasi (135-220 C. E.), the redactor of the Mishna. His calculation is comparatively simple alongside of some of the complicated efforts of later men. He believed that the Messiah would come 365 years after the destruction, (which was in 70 C. E.,) that is in the year 435 C. E. He bases his conclusion on the passage in Isaiah 63.4:

"For the day of vengeance that was in my heart and my year of redemption are come."

He assigned one year to every day in the solar year and in this fashion obtained his figures.

The computations of the Gaon Saadia (d. 942) are much more involved. He uses the passage in Dan: 12.6.7:

"How long shall it be to the end of wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river where he lifted up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven and swore by him that liveth forever that it shall be for a *time, times, and a half*."

In verse 12 of the same chapter this is defined as 1335 days, the days to be considered as years. "Times" refers to the two periods of the existence of the Kingdom of Israel, the first being the 480 years up to the building of the First Temple, and the second period of 410 years until the destruction of this temple. This gives a sum of 890 years. One half of this sum is 445, thus "times and a half" would be 1335 years. By deft arrangement of the figures in Dan. 12:11 and 8:14 he makes this figure appear again and again. The question of a terminus a quo would then arise. He takes as a starting point the third year of the reign of Cyrus when the Jews were given permission to return to Palestine, and which according to old Jewish chronology took place in 367 B. C. E. According to Saadia, 1335 years after this date or 968 C. E., the Messiah was supposed to have come.

This effort would seem to be complicated enough but that of Rashi (1045-1105) the Great Commentator, is even the more so, and involves a great variety of methods and chronological subtleties. He bases his results on Dan. 8:14.

"And he said unto me, unto evening and morning 2300 years, then shall the sanctuary be victorious. The value in Gematria of the words "erev" ערב (evening) and "boker" בקר (morning) is 574. Add the 2300 mentioned in the text and you have 2874. In this case the starting point is the beginning of the Egyptian captivity. To trace the chronology from this point; the Jews were in Egypt 210 years; 480 years passed from the exodus to the First Temple; the Temple stood for 410 years; the Babylonian captivity lasted 70 years and the Second Temple stood for 420 years. Hence, from Egypt to the second destruction is 1590 years. Now in Dan. 12:11,12 we are told that 1290 years must elapse from the time that the continual burnt offering shall be taken away until the time of redemption. Since the offering ceased six years before the destruction, i. e. in the 1584th year from the Egyptian captivity as computed above, the addition of 1584 and 1290 gives us the figure 2874 of Dan. 8:14 spoken of before. According to Rashi the Second Temple was destroyed in 68 C. E. Therefore the burnt offering ceased in 62 C. E. Since the Messiah was to come 1290 years after, his destined arrival was scheduled for 1352 C. E.

The preceding calculations give us an idea of the methods of attack and the line of thought and supposition followed. There were a great many others who tried their hand at this type of divination including such men as Maimonides, Judah Halevi, Nahmanides, Isaac Abarbanel and Isaac Luria.

In general, we notice several outstanding characteristics running through all the computations. The first is their basis in scriptural passages, thus making the results the hidden expression of divine will. We notice, too, the constant recourse to mystic methods for the attainment of reasonable conclusions. We see the frantic effort to garner something specific, and assign a definite date to something intangible and beyond the pale of the capacity of the human mind.

In the hurly burly rush of modern times we cannot sense the mystic in life, we cannot feel that contact with some divine spirit, that ecstatic liberation of the soul from earthly bonds and its soaring aloft in the realms of heaven. We are too preoccupied with material pursuits and mercenary efforts. To understand, then, the motives, the feelings of these men, the representatives of a race oppressed on all sides, we must remove them from the spotlight of modern times, and take ourselves back to the slow-moving world of yesterday. And in so doing we can better understand the next phase of our subject—the Pseudo-Messiahs—and the readiness of great masses of Jews to follow a leader to the Promised Land and freedom.

One of the earliest of this long list, a man named Moses, appeared in Crete about the middle of the 5th century and won a large following among the Jews. He indicated a date for general departure to Jerusalem, and on the assigned day he led them to a cliff overlooking the sea and ordered them to hurl themselves into the waves, with the hope of God's parting the waters. It is said that many perished in consequence of this misplaced faith.

One of the most spectacular of the Pseudo-Messiahs was David Alroy who appeared about 1147 during the Second Crusade. He was an adventurer, a magician, and a warrior, and gained a large following. Most of the stories told of him are legendary. The movement he set in motion resulted in his own death, and considerable persecution to the Jewish community of Bagdad.

David Reubeni was a most extraordinary man, and combined within himself the attributes of patience, faith, and diplomacy. He came out of the East with a message of hope for all Jewry. He travelled over Europe and Asia recounting wonderful tales of a Jewish king who had under his command 300,000 men ready to march on Jerusalem. Although at first he made no pretensions to Messiahship, he gradually donned the cloak and gained a great army of followers. Among these supporters was a young Maranno, Diogo Pires, elevated in the higher strata of society, who gave up his life and future, adopted Judaism as his religion, took the name of

Solomon Molcho, plunged into the mysteries of the Kabbala, travelled about preaching the advent of the Messiah, and designating Reubeni as the Chosen One of the Lord. Reubeni himself treated him coldly, in the beginning, but the youth, unrestrained, continued his studies and preachments. After many setbacks in their effort to gain support in capturing Palestine, Molcho and Reubeni pleaded their case together before Charles V. However they were imprisoned, the proselyte Molcho being burned by the Inquisition, and Reubeni incarcerated and later, it is thought, he was poisoned. What Reubeni lacked in enthusiasm, Molcho supplemented in fervor and faith in his mission. Reubeni was patient and practical, and though steeped in mysticism, yet acclaimed in his time by many non-Kabbalists.

The best-known of all the Pseudo-Messiahs is Sabbatai Zevi. While still a youth, he began to gain the attention of the Jews of Smyrna by his pleasing appearance, his secluded mode of life, and his ascetic habits. He dived into the mysteries of the Kabbala and gained admiration from many for his erudition and proficiency, a circumstance which turned his head. At the age of 22 in the year 1648, that epic year forecast in the Zohar as the Messianic year, Sabbatai revealed himself to his disciples as the redeemer of Israel. For violating the Talmudic dictum against pronouncing the ineffable name of God, he and his followers were excommunicated, and later banished from Smyrna. This persecution merely helped to strengthen his belief in his mission, and he assumed the attitude that he had to undergo certain hardships before attaining recognition. After several years of wandering he came to Salonica, one of the centres of Kabbala. Here he continued his operations, and by means of several publicity stunts, seemingly leaguely himself with divine powers, he gained great support from many Jews. He took up his residence in Jerusalem where he awaited heavenly confirmation of his Messiahship. Such recognition not being forthcoming, he returned to Smyrna where he was accepted with open arms, the ban of excommunication being entirely forgotten, and with great festivity and blowing of the shofar he announced himself Messiah, son of David. The excitement caused by this event spread through all

Jewry. His former opponents did penance for their sins. Jews flocked from all lands to see the new Messiah. Women and children, men and boys recited the Zohar in the streets. The Christian world looked on with silent amazement and hushed expectation. Jewish business was neglected and everywhere people were selling their lands and property in preparation for the awaited trip to Palestine. The printing presses of Amsterdam could not keep pace with the demands for the new prayer books which were adorned with cuts of Sabbatai and King David. The frenzy gripped the most sceptical. All over, Jews went wild with the joy of the anticipated redemption.

Comet-like this great burst of flame descended below the horizon, and disillusionment took the place of former ecstasy. Yielding to force, Sabbatai turned to Mohammedanism, married a Turkish wife and took many of his followers with him into the folds of Islam. Many continued to adhere to the fiction and others, still under the influence of the furor of the times, were easy prey for the several imposters who followed in his path.

The question now arises, what has become of the Messianic idea in our own day? All those forces which resulted in speculation yesterday, have almost ceased to exist today. Those same factors which subordinated the spirit of our people, and magnified the degree of their gullibility have also gradually faded. The hope for a supernatural emancipation has almost disappeared, and in its place has arisen a destructive scepticism which denies

even the likelihood of a miraculous redemption. Very few Jews of today would put faith in a date forecast on the basis of Gematria. The drift from the supernatural is peculiar to all religions in our modern age and is not confined to our own. Yet release from these supposed bonds of supernaturalism by modernistic tendencies has not destroyed the innate human belief in a higher power beyond the extremes of human reach. There always remains in the most material of beings that natural attraction toward the supernatural, which is the source of all religion and all faith. No industrial, economic, or political revolution can alter the characteristics of the human heart and though certain feelings may be relegated to the field of superstition, and as such supposedly discarded, nevertheless their roots are never destroyed, and only the proper formula is needed for their resurrection.

The Messianic hope still lives, deep down in the hearts of the Jewish people. Its manifestations have gradually receded into the past... It lives in that halo of legend and story bound up with every struggle and every outcry of our people. It still lives in the hearts of our oppressed, and it lives in the memory of those who were witness to the horrible massacres of our people on the other side of the water. It lives as an everlasting monument to the highest ideal of patience and faith, ever exhibited in the annals of history. It lives as the beginning and as the ending, the root and essence, the apotheosis and epitome of the spiritual idealism of the Jew.



Child-Life

By ELI LEVINE

SCHMULIKEL was lying huddled up in his easy bed, staring into the distance through the open window. The moonlight, cast into patterns by the leaves and twigs of the large tree that stood in front of the house, flooded the small, neatly-arranged bedroom. Schmulikel made a momentous and important decision. As he reached his resolve, the Cheder, the creaking table with the high benches beside it, the faces of his classmates, and the grim countenance of the all-powerful Rebe, arose as clear images in his mind.

The Rebe is a learned man—he knows everything—is a little bent, his small beard is turning grey right under the chin, and there are numerous wrinkles around his eyes and the corners of his large mouth. But the Rebe's pretty, black-eyed Susanna with her smiling mischievous face set in behind the jet black locks of her small curly head, makes up for her father's severity. Susanna often peeps in through the door, glances at the boys and sometimes at him only—at least he thinks so—smiles shrewdly and then quickly disappears into the garden, behind the house.

Schmulikel's thoughts turned to the Rebe and his stringent warning made that afternoon to the two rows of his timid Talmidim: "Woe to him who stays away from Cheder on Lag B'Omer." The students listened painfully to his ringing voice and turned away their heads. Although Schmulkikel had ample reason to be convinced of the Rebe's determination, he could not resign himself to the idea. For weeks he had been preparing his small troop for the Championship battle with the Yankel Select Eleven.

While Schmulkikel was thus meditating, a gentle breeze began to sway the tree in front of the window. The objects in the room began to dance in the alternating light and shadow. Now, he made out a cat... a dog... elves and sheidim marching straight at him. He pulled the coverlet over his head. There was a valley behind the pillow... the valley was infinitely deep and full of a variety of colors... it began to shift and sway... Schmulkikel became dizzy... vague forms appeared before him... the Rebe... Yan-

kel... Susanna... curly hair... war in the forest... glory... and finally Susanna again. He finally fell into a sound sleep.

The rays of the morning sun were already streaming in through the window when Schmulkikel began to stir.

He heard his name called and recognized the voice of Shmerel, his lieutenant.

"I'll be right out" shouted Schmulkikel. In a few moments he was outside, where his group of soldiers were eagerly awaiting him.

"Attention!" called Schmulkikel.

"About face! Forward march!"

Schmulikel's house was at the town line so that his light brigade was soon out in the fields.

At about noon Schmulkikel gave the command to halt, for they had reached the woods. The forest was a grand scene. The sturdy oaks and the white birches were fully decked in their shining green vestments that became them so well, while the slender chestnuts, straining upward in all their glory of young life, were fanned by a gentle breeze.

"Into the woods, and let's pick berries!" rang Schmulkikel's voice. With a jubilant cry of "Hoo! Hoo! Hoo! Hurrah!" the boys spread out among the bushes and were soon deeply engrossed in their work. In another part of the forest, not far away, Yankel's men were similarly occupied. His men had arrived earlier and they had almost filled the jugs brought along for this purpose.

As soon as both parties had finished picking, there began a feverish preparation for the coming battle. Schmulkikel ordered his men to dig trenches and to collect lumps of earth and small stones. The war finally began. Missiles were flying on all sides. The fight was long and bitter. Yankel's Select Eleven exerted themselves to the utmost, but Schmulkikel's daring and intrepidity spurred on his "men" to even greater effort. He finally commanded his men to leave the trenches and fight the enemy hand to hand. And it was here that the real fun began.

In triumph Schmulkikel headed both troops on their way home. Schmulkikel felt uneasy. The growing darkness, the mighty forest looming in the distance like a huge monster.

and the constant buzzing of insects, weighted his heart with fear of the next day. The fear grew into dread, as real as that of a person to be hanged on the morrow. He began to walk faster, and all the boys walked faster too. Then he began to run, and all the boys ran with him, for the ominous stillness of the night had gripped the hearts of the young boys.

When Schmulikel reached home, a good supper was awaiting him, but he could not eat, for he imagined the Rebe's harsh look directed at him. He wanted to tell his mother of the dreadful thing he had done, but could not. With gloomy forebodings Schmulikel went to bed. In his sleep he dreamt of the Rebe . . . that he was the Rebe's favorite, winning triumph after triumph . . . that he, himself, was Rebe . . . good and kind to Shmerle and Berel and to Susanna . . . Susanna was demure and pretty . . . a queen of the grass and trees . . . She was leaning over his chair, fondly whispering in his ear . . . But suddenly Yankel appeared on the scene, disguised as the Rebe . . . And his look was very harsh and stern.

In the morning, on his way to Cheder, Schmulikel was still under the influence of the ghastly dreams that he had had at night. When he thought of the Rebe his heart would palpitate like a freshly slaughtered chicken. He would not go to the hateful Cheder . . . he would run away to distant lands where no people lived . . . and he would roam about in these sunny climes, plucking rose-cheeked apples from the trees . . . and one bright day he would turn around . . . and lo! Susanna would be behind him . . . red and smiling . . . "My dear Susanna how do you come here?" "I could not live without you, and I followed you into these lands of Eden. Please don't drive me away. Your life is my life and your country is my country" . . . Then they would come across a wild tribe of ancient time and he would be their king and Susanna would be their queen . . . And one day they would return in pomp and triumph, and the Rebe would bow before them . . . But he, Schmulikel, would descend from his stately carriage, raise the Rebe, and say: "It is all right . . . I forgive you . . ."

Absorbed in these bright fancies, Schmulikel reached the Cheder. The mere sight of the house, the dilapidated roof thatched with

straw, were sufficient to dispel the flimsy webs of his imagination. He breathed deeply, mumbled a few words of prayer, and entered the gates of Hell! The same table . . . the same benches . . . the faces of the students were tense as if about to witness an execution.

"Come here Schmulik!" commanded the Rebe.

Schmulikel came over to the Rebe's chair like a lamb ready for slaughter.

"Where were you yesterday?"

"Where was I yesterday?" The glorious fight of the last day, the triumph that he had, and the fact that he was commander-in-chief of two armies, made him ashamed of his weakness. Boldly looking up at the Rebe, he answered that yesterday was Lag B'Omer, a holiday, a field day. The Rebe's anger was aroused. The pupils knew it. Schmulikel knew it, but he was not afraid any more.

"Boy, he'll get it", whispered Chatzkel to Chaim-Yankel who was sitting near him.

"And how, Kemo Shekossuv!" answered Chaim-Yankel.

Without much ado or ceremony, the Rebe invited Schmulikel to stretch himself out on the table. Schmulikel, inspired by the martyr's zeal, was taking the punishment very lightly. The inexplicable fear which had possession of him before entirely left him. Suddenly he heard light steps coming from the garden. He felt a jerk at his heart. The door opened, and Schmulikel's worst fears were realized. He groaned. A big lump arose in his throat and he felt like choking. He had not minded the beating, but now he could not bear it any longer, for Susanna was there witnessing his shame. He dared not turn his face to look at her. He was sure that she too sympathized with him. Yes . . . Susanna . . . he could imagine her sorrowful face full of sympathy and pity. He did not feel the heavy strap descending on his back; he forgot the Rebe and the schoolmates; his mind was on Susanna . . . He once had met her alone . . . in the garden behind the house . . . the creepers were languishing . . . Susanna was sitting under the shadow of an apple tree . . . A red rose was adorning her curly black locks . . . and he, Schmulikel, was there . . . A gallant prince paying court to the Queen of Spring.

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EDITORIAL

EDUCATION, as has been stated time and again, is a preparation for life.

Some men in public office have lately, upon the basis of this adage, advocated a radical change in our present educational system. Literature, philosophy, and abstract sciences are to be banned from the colleges. The deck must be cleared for courses that shall train the students for a practical life. How to earn a livelihood, how to adapt oneself to society, to various financial, political and social conditions — these are the proper objects of a practical education.

It is hardly necessary for students who have been brought up under the idealistic atmosphere of religion to express a dissenting opinion. Practical life is a fraction only of the whole of life, which is essentially spiritual. A curriculum such as these extreme materialists propose would scarcely satisfy the real needs of culturally-minded young men. History, philosophy, poetry and even theoretical science, satisfy our thirst to know our past development and present environment; they also shape a finer man with a broad and healthy outlook upon life.

* * *

STILL, is there nothing we can learn from this newest doctrine, even though we are out of accord with it as a whole? Is there nothing in the proposal that may be adopted even by its opponents? The suggestion was undoubtedly born out of the conditions of our age. The need for reform may be exaggerated and the plan of reform be deformed, but there is no denial of the fact that there is a kernel of truth in the matter.

What is the nature of the suggestion mentioned? Its main features are that it disregards the spiritual side of man and stresses the materialistic side. Let us, then, after having discredited the first part of its attitude, retain from the second part whatever is not exaggerated, overestimated and magnified.

We do not and cannot shut our eyes to practical realities; we cannot afford to ignore facts that stare us in the face.

The fact is that the students of the Yeshiva are the prospective leaders of the great Jewish masses in America. Leadership has always been the most difficult task one could undertake in the social and spiritual realms; it is

doubly so in our own age when things are being re-evaluated and the rabbi's field of activity is constantly widening.

The preparation for the spiritual aspect of the rabbi's prerequisite, is generally acknowledged satisfactory. Leadership, however, is quite another matter. This quality cannot be injected by either faculty or books; it must be developed and trained. The conscientious Yeshiva student must himself search out the opportunity and the occasion to assert his influence among his peers, the Jewish youth. He should develop a genuine interest in humanitarian problems and in questions that face the Jewish world. He is advised to observe the reaction of the people to issues with which they are confronted. He is to acquire first hand information about the spiritual and social phases of our society; he must study their weaknesses and their remedies. He must, in brief, train himself to be a leader of men, of the Jewish masses.

It is not complete absorption in social life that we preach. The great majority of our time must still be devoted to the pursuit of our cultural studies. Yet no student who wishes to be well adapted to his call in life can afford to leave himself without a sound conception of what his vocation will demand of him. Clarification and crystallization of the subject can only be beneficial to him.

There are enough organizations that would welcome the presence of Yeshiva students among them. Young Israel and the Mizrahi Hatzair are examples of organizations that are anxious to have as leading members students of the Yeshiva. These and other organizations have shown their eagerness to be inspired by the intensive Jewish spirit that our students carry with them. Many a prominent rabbi has started his communal leadership in these organizations while still attending the Yeshiva; there are those of us now who are heart and soul devoted to Young Israel or some other movement of the Jewish youth. Our complaint is that there are not enough of us following this excellent example.

It is by combining spiritual maturity with worldly sagacity that we can hope to leave our mark.

MY ISLE

By LOUIS BARISHNIKOFF

I sit and look far, down where still the white winter lingers, where still an unguent of soft, soothing snow covers the silent earth. I look at Gravesend Creek, shrivelled to map size, a trickling, muddy rivulet. I look at a vast stretch of barren land, a frozen country, white and silent, winding westward from the cold shores of Coney Island to the hazy, morning sky-line, and there dissolving with air and earth into one deep, hazy golden sleep.

Here and there, in that slumberous haze, beyond the buttes and furthestmost foothills of this desolate land, burrowed into the vast unfutured plain, stand a few odd, weather-beaten shacks. As the dark shadows fade with the passing night and return to their infernal abode, a weary figure leaves a humble hut, and treads these frozen fields, forlorn. Now it stoops, raises something from the cold ground. Now it comes closer and I can discern some human characteristics. From my elevated position I see only relaxed womanly features, topped by a crowd of flowing white hair. Everything else is hazy, but even from the distance I seem to feel a steady, piercing gaze directed from a pair of sinister and provocative eyes—eyes that tell of suffering and sacrifice, poverty and denial.

The island is not wanting in these impoverished slaves of mighty Hunger; the island cries with them. But they are lost from all consideration, all human sympathy. An urban associates the island only with gay lights, only with dance and frolic, only with filth and sin. The outrageous and deplorable condition shadowed by the dark blanket of destiny, he does not see, his heart does not understand . . .

Towards the east lies the centre of the isle. Gay lights are now but a memory, for they have faded with the warmth of summer. The island is cold and quiet and only the tired waves break the silence as they meet the waiting shore. By day the sea is gilded with an azure flow of sunlight, by night it hides beneath a blanket of silvery moonlight. By day one can see the slow majestic liners making their way towards the end of the sky. By night the stars are not the only twinkling

gems—the stately liners, coming into harbor, pass the narrows adorned with distant lights.

Though winter rules the isle and the air is sullen and sad, my soul exalts to solemn thought and ethereal musing. When evening comes and a cold wind sweeps the solemn air, I visit the cherished shores adorned with a winter robe of purest white, and I run along the coast, following with joy the waterline which, as the waters recede, is left stamped on the shore.

* * *

When summer returns, and the languid sun begins to send from the rosy west her warming rays, the grade of nature fades from the isle. The profound peace is swept from the atmosphere and in place of harmony, comes havoc. The sea no longer holds its sway, and the air no more its peace. But all is not lost—to the west still lies that vast meadow, though its grass is now sere and yellow. The oak and maple trees point long shadowy fingers towards the motherly sky whose gentle breast feeds them fresh, life-giving rain.

* * *

Though the sun is low, the plain shimmer in the heat. Nowhere in that vast expanse is there a sign of life. You might be looking upon a dead world or a painted canvas. I find myself a little grove, heavy with shade, and there I rest contented. There I lie, drawing pleasure and delight from the renescent and inspiring shades, and touched by the harmonious perfection of this mysterious peace I fall to reminiscence—a mood of contemplation and understanding. The landscape seems to accentuate a natural atmosphere not yet contaminated by the fetid breath of civilization, a virgin atmosphere not yet seduced by the crushing and alien force of industrialism.

Tears from the depth of some divine despair now well in my heart and gather to my eyes. Already I see an alien power crushing my isle. My trees are thrown to earth, my grove upset and destroyed. Huge machines, noisy men at work, the clang of shovels, the crash of dynamite—all take part in the orgy of destruction.

Virgil and Lucretius

By ERNEST RAPHAEL

"Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere
causas . . .

Fortunatus et ille does qui novit
agrestes."

—Georgics, Book II

To live at the birth of a civilization is to partake of its uncertainties and vacillations; to live at the decay of a civilization is to share in its chaos and degeneration. But to live at the decay of one civilization and the birth of another is indeed a privilege, for then one is both in a grave and a womb. The mechanical standards of the past disappear, and an invigorating force takes the helm to guide mankind toward a new light. The feeble philosophies of the past crumble before the onslaught of a powerful Will—the Present. The narrow morality gives way to a salutary freedom of imagination and idealism.

Such was the state of affairs at Rome at the time of Augustus and Virgil. A period of destruction and civil strife gave way to a golden era of peace. Anthropomorphic Jupiter, Neptune, and Mars were vanquished by the master swordsmanship of Lucretius. A stagnant religion disappeared before the implacable Nature of Lucretius and the ethics and morality of Virgil.

A consideration of the details of the transformation of a civilization would be both interesting and instructive but that would divert us from our primary purpose, which is: the observation of the influence of Lucretius upon Virgil and the latter's modification of the Lucretian philosophy. That Virgil was influenced by Lucretius admits no doubt. The similarity of many of Virgil's phrases to those of Lucretius is evident to the reader of the two poets. It is moreover, highly improbable that Virgil's mentality should not have been stirred by the highly poetic appeal of Lucretius for that contemplative quietism in life, which constitutes one of the essentials of the Lucretian philosophy. His early training in philosophy under the able guidance of Siron, the Epicurean philosopher, must have impressed itself very deeply upon the poetic soul of Virgil. What is of interest to us then is to see what of the Lucretian or Epicurean philosophy Virgil adopted and

what he rejected. Our thesis thus resolves itself into the following four parts: (1) an analysis of Lucretius in his "De Rerum Natura"; (2) the psychological factors that led Virgil to reject the Lucretian philosophy; (3) Virgil's modification of Lucretius as seen in his Georgics and Aeneid; (4) and finally a study of the sixth book of the Aeneid.

To proceed in order, let us briefly outline the philosophy of Lucretius. For Lucretius, Democritus and Epicurus were the only saviors. Of that he had no doubt. As a result of this pious adherence to the atomic or Democritan theory there vanished the whole supernatural and spiritual world of fancy, together with all the hopes and fears of a future life. The gods, if they existed, ceased to be of any importance to man, as having no interest in him and doing him neither harm nor good. "His ideal," says Fowler, "seems to be quietism in this life and annihilation afterwards." But let Lucretius speak for himself:

"O genus infelix humanum, talia
divis cum tribuit facta, atque iras
adiunxit acerbus."

(O unhappy race, to ascribe such things to the gods, and to add thereto such bitter wrath). Man must cease to rely upon this cosmic support, but rather "pacata posse omnia mente tueri" (be able to survey all things with a mind at peace). In the eyes of Lucretius, all worship was prompted by fear and based on ignorance of natural law. Man's cowardlike nature had invented the gods for his own purpose. Alone in a vast world, man had personified the inanimate forces of nature and made them his companions. The gods beat man into obedience and submission by the threat of Hell. "That fear of Hell," says Lucretius, "which troubles the life of man to its inmost depth, overspreads everything with the blackness of death, and permits no pleasure to be pure and unalloyed, must be driven out headlong." Man, once freed from this fear of death, argues Lucretius, would rise in spirituality, for then he would follow the laws of Nature: quietness, order, and regularity. He would rise to the heights of the gods, as Lucretius himself said:

"quare religio pedibus subiecta vicissim
opoterit nos exaequat victoria caelo"
(Wherefor religion is now in her turn cast
down and trampled under foot, whilst we
by the victory are raised to heaven).

What happens then to the gods? Gone
are the wise and loving gods to whom man
could appeal in prayer; gone are the great
deities from the world of man. The scene
of human life becomes an insignificant part
of an infinite cosmic totality. As to the Greek
Stoics, so to Lucretius "the familiar Universe
seemed a strange place, terrifying in its enormous
magnitude—the earth stretching into
regions of unexplored possibilities, moved
and shaken by inhuman forces." Amid this
cosmic silence they (human beings) "awoke,
as it were, to find themselves lost in the
streets of a huge strange city." (E. Bevan).

Coming to our second point in order, we
become, once we fully realize the meaning and
implications of the Lucretian philosophy,
dubious whether Virgil could accept in a
wholesale fashion the philosophy of Lucretius.
Virgil, whose heart and soul went out
to the farmer, whose sympathy and kindness
were for the shepherd, whose love and tenderness
were given over to the lowly laborer
in the field, could not conceive so purposeless
and inhuman a universe as Lucretius described.
The nature of Virgil ruled by sweet, calm feelings,
full of sympathy and full of hope could not admit
the existence of the inanimate mechanistic cosmos
of Lucretius. The poet in Virgil, says Glover,
"cried out against a universe of no content and
no meaning, where the only reality was the
individual, and he is even incomplete." Virgil's
heart warmed with pity at the sight of suffering
of man and animal alike. For this we need
no greater proof than the nightingale robbed
of her young:

"quem durus arator observans nido
implumes detraxit: at illa flet noctem,
ramoque sedens miserabile carmen
integrat et maestis late loca questibus
implet;"

(which some unfeeling ploughman noticing
in the nest has stolen unfledged; but she laments
the night, and perched upon a branch renews
her doleful notes, and far and wide fills every
region with her mournful plaints). Numerous
passages might be quoted to show Virgil's
tenderness and humaneness toward the
animal kingdom, but for our purpose the

passage just quoted is sufficient to illustrate
the point in question. It follows then, most
obviously, that "he who could so feel toward
animals must needs have a soul of pity for
man." It was then a powerful love for
man, his hopes, his gods that compelled Virgil
to depart from the shores of the Lucretian
world.

"His mind and his reason go with the
philosopher" (Lucretius), says Glover, speaking
of Virgil; "his heart turns to the faith
of the past." In its underlying spirit the
statement is true, but on account of its epigrammatic
terseness, it is somewhat misleading.
The hasty reader might be led to conclude
that Virgil, fully understanding the Lucretian
philosophy, realized its shortcomings by the
consciousness of reason, by an analysis of
life's realities and their potential concomitants.
But nothing could be further from the truth.
To express such belief is to destroy that which
is most eloquent and beautiful in Virgil—the
poet's affinity with that which is aesthetic
and noble in nature and loving and tender
in man—an affinity approaching self-identification.
Virgil was no more aware of his great love
and mission than the flower is of its fragrance
and beauty. They were in the very fibre of
the man, the very essence of the man.

But Virgil's soul was not entirely unaffected
by Lucretian thought. The master-poet
could not help being touched by the dispassionate
eloquence of Lucretius. The similarity of
many of the phrases of the poets is sufficient
evidence of the tribute that Virgil paid to
this philosopher-poet. But perhaps the most
permanent influence of Lucretius upon Virgil
might be best made evident by a contrast
of the underlying spirit of the Eclogues with
that of the Georgics.

The Eclogues are at best pastoral poems
describing the life of shepherds after the
manner of the Idylls of Theocritus. But
what is most noteworthy for a true understanding
of the Eclogues—apart from the delicacy
of their language and the music of their
verse—is the complete absence of reality,
and the marked presence of an agrarian
religious naivete. The characters seem to
move in a utopian dreamland, in a country
more the product of a sublime imagination
than that of actual observation. Tytirus and
Meliboeus are not familiar rugged shepherds
but rather voices from the land of fantasy.

musical echoes from the divine soul of Virgil. But more pertinent to our thesis is the rural pietistic element in these Eclogues. The shepherd goes about his way tending his flocks, piping a tune, and engaging with his neighbor in "alternate song." He worships the nymphs, the rural deities in charming groves, but he is never conscious of the vast universe about him, of an ethics and a morality above his immediate needs. The sense of mystery, of cosmic consciousness, characteristic of a progressive pastoral people, so definitely present in the Georgics, is strangely lacking in his Eclogues.

We meet, however, with a different spirit as we read the Georgics. True, the Georgics, in the main, deal with tilling, sowing planting, and management of cattle. The careful reader, however, cannot but feel the chords of universal sympathy vibrant throughout the poem. As we read the Georgics, we catch flashes of a spirit breaking through the hampering confines of primitive fears and superstitions in search of the divine spirit interpenetrating the entire universe. The narrow sympathy, characteristic of all primitive peoples, is replaced by a universal sympathy extended to man and animal alike. The passage of the nightingale bereft of her young, quoted above, well illustrates the universal tenderness of Virgil. In describing the dying bull, Virgil asks in a soliloquizing fashion: What do the oxen profit now by their labor or kind services? What avails it to have turned the heavy lands with the share? In the Eclogues the death of a bull would have evoked a prayer and a sacrifice to the rural deities in the hope of receiving a blessing; (See Horace—Liber 3-18: how truly he recaptures the spirit of the rural dweller!) but in the Georgics it is the cause for the contemplation upon the mysterious cycle of the life—force. In the Georgics there seems to be an affinity between the man in the field and the nature that surrounds him. The laborer in the field seems to have become conscious of a vast Nature symbolical of the divine spirits, and hence the higher necessity to submit to them by prayer and sacrifice. As Sellar has well remarked, the sense of natural beauty is in the Georgics intertwined with the toil of man, raising him as it were, to a higher level of humanity as he lifts his eyes from his work.

This universality of thought and feeling in the Georgic is decidedly Lucretian. The emergence of man from the attachment to a limited anthropomorphism and his search in the cosmic evolution for a higher principle of ethics well reflect Epicurean thought. But there is one essential difference between Lucretius and Virgil: whereas Lucretius overcame by the vastness of the cosmos and convinced of the regularity of Nature's laws, smashed the whole primitive theology by the assertion:

Fear holds dominion over mortality
Only because, seeing in land and sky
So much the cause of which no wise
they know,

Men think Divinities are working there; Virgil, because of his pious nature, saw in this newly revealed universe "a secret unceasing, tranquil power, communicating to outward things the grace and tenderness of human sentiment, the variety and vivacity of human energy." (Sellar) For the decaying State religion Lucretius sought the remedy in a knowledge of a *rerum natura* (the nature of things); but Virgil found it in the elevation of the conception of deity, in placing ritualism upon an ethico-religious basis. Lucretius, realizing the insignificance of man in the universe, found consolation "in a quietism in this life and annihilation afterwards"; but Virgil, in order to approximate religion to the new conception of the cosmos, found his haven in a higher spiritual morality. Lucretius raised the position of man by destroying his gods; Virgil, because of an inherent religious yearning, raised the position of man by elevating his conception of ethics and the gods.

This widening of the religious outlook of Virgil should not, however, lead us to assume that Virgil rejected the old rituals and deities. No one of the Latin poets was a more earnest teacher of the necessity of the scrupulous observance of the traditional modes of worship and sacrifice. All the rural and city cults retained with him their original, specific importance, but with this difference: whereas to the ordinary Roman ritualism was a formal habitual recognition of a strong power, to Virgil it was a spontaneous force for propitiating the gods. Whereas to the average Roman the relationship between himself and the gods was sort of *quid pro quo* agreement, a give-and-take proposition, to

Virgil this same relationship was "a feeling of happy dependence on a higher Power and a desire to conform to His will." In conclusion, we may say that by sublimating the old religion and its formalistic ritualism — brought about, in our opinion, through his contact with Lucretian thought—Virgil came to his conception of a higher morality and a more spontaneous, spiritual relationship between a divine Power and human life. Selar's statement seems very appropriate at this juncture: His religious belief, like his other speculative convictions, was composite and undefined; yet it embraced what was purest and most vital in the religion of antiquity, and in its deepest intuitions it seems to look forward to the belief which became dominant in Rome four centuries later.

This Lucretian world-view, with its modification or its religious transvaluation, is best seen in the following quotation from the *Georgics*:

"Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere
causas . . .
Fortunatus et ille deos qui novit
agrestes."

(Fortunate is he who knows the causes of all things . . . Blest too is he who knows the rural gods). How typically Lucretian is the first sentence. How typically Virgilian is the second. In praying to the Muses, Virgil says: . . . accept my devotion and teach me the constellations of heaven and the labors of the moon; what is the cause of earthquakes; by what force of nature is it that the seas are made to swell and burst their barriers, and to sink back into their channels; why winter's suns make haste to dip themselves in the ocean, or what delay retards its tedious nights . . . Happy is he who knows the causes of all things, and who has trodden under foot all idle fears, and inexorable Destiny, and the roar of devouring Acheron. In the same breath, he continues: Blest, too, is he who has been intimate with the rural deities, Pan, old Sylvanus, and the sister nymphs. Virgil and Lucretius blended into one majestic poem! The spirit of the "De Rerum Natura" and of the "Eclogues" blended into perfect harmony. The method through which this harmony was effected needs elaboration, but before we do this we must deviate for a moment, and note the influence the cosmos had upon the ancient mind.

Generally speaking, the study of the cele-

tial bodies and the discovery of the laws of Nature evolved among the ancients two distinct attitudes toward life: pantheistic Stoicism and religious Mysticism. Stoicism by its emphasis upon the regularity of Nature's laws formulated a Pantheism by which it conceived a spirit interpenetrating all things in such a way as to admit no essential difference between God and the world. Man ceased to be a favorite of the gods and his position in the universe became that of a microcosm in a macrocosm. No longer was immortality and heavenly bliss reserved for him, but dissolution into the primordial stuff or *prima materia* of which he was made.

The study of the heavenly bodies, on the other hand, was conducive to mysticism. When man raised his eyes to heaven and followed the evolution of the heavenly bodies, there arose in the inmost depth of his soul a veneration for the prime Mover of this infinite mass. Thus the founder of Neo-Platonism argues that the reverent contemplation of the world brings the soul into contact with the God of the cosmos. In pagan mysticism, too, the observation of the sky "causes the soul, a detached parcel of the fires of ether, to enter into communion with the gods which shine in the firmament. Possessed with their desire to know them, this soul receives their revelations; they instruct it as to their nature; thanks to them it understands the phenomena produced in the cosmic organism." (F. Cumont).

Thus Virgil, the epitome of noble piety, affects this harmony between the traditional religion and the new concept of Nature by making nature symbolize the divine. By a knowledge of Nature, man will lose all fear of "inexorable Destiny and the roar of devouring Acheron" because of a quickening of the religious response in man. The *Georgics* then reveal to us Virgil in his purest and truest nature: a native, rural piety emerging into the universal, a pastoral nature transcending its source through poetic divination, and a love for the ancient gods and cult—paradoxical as it may sound—embracing the cosmos.

In the *Aeneid*, too, there is manifest the spirit of Lucretius. The fate of Aeneas is not in the hands of the gods—though their aid is indispensable—but rather in the power of the Fata. Even the gods are subservient to this Power that moves the forces of life with a stern and unflinching might. Juno, in wish-

ing to make Carthage the 'sovereign of the nations' adds: *Si qua Fata sinant*. (If the Fates permit). The entire story of Dido is introduced, not as some critics would have it, for pathetic and artistic effect, but to illustrate the helplessness of individual passions against the will of Heaven. Aeneas, too, is an unwilling tool in the hands of the Fates. He falls a victim to the passions of queenly Dido, forgetting the mission for which he was destined; in the midst of danger he cries out in despair that he would have been thrice fortunate if the fate of Hector had befallen him. Warned of danger by Mercury, Aeneas embarks upon his ship, only to fall asleep, careless of his fate and sense of duty. In the sixth book, the priestess rebukes Aeneas for being a laggard, with the words: *Cesas in vota precesque, Tros Aenea, cessas?* Aeneas is not permitted to follow his individual desires, but must always submit to the determined Will of the Fata. Almost to the very end do we find the sternness of the Fates in their treatment of human passions and interests.

But, as in the Georgics, alongside this picture of hard Destiny, there is also typical Roman piety. Aeneas propitiates the gods by prayer and sacrifice. All rituals are observed with the meticulous care characteristic of the Romans. The deep respect that Aeneas pays to his father is in line with the best traditions of Roman piety. The performance of the ritual of the Parentalia also emphasizes the pietas of Aeneas. Thus we see how there developed this immediate relationship between man and the universal—the Fates; and man's final victory when he subjects his individual interests and aspirations to the consummate will and purpose of the universal Power.

With this view well in mind, let us now approach the sixth book of the Aeneid. This book deals with the descent of Aeneas into to nether world, his meeting with his father Anchises, and the latter's prophecy of the future greatness of Rome. It would not come properly under our thesis, were it not for the fact that our point of view does away with a serious criticism of Prof. Nettleship. He points out that the book opens with the description of the lower world with its monsters and rivers; but at the conclusion of the book we find Anchises expounding the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul—that one spirit pervades all things, that from this spirit all living things derive their being, that the body is the prison-house of this divine

spark whose liberation comes in death, that guilt is purged after death until the heavenly aether is left pure, that after this purification the emancipated soul returns again to its embodiment on Earth. "The ordinary mythology", says Prof. Nettleship, "is put side by side with the doctrine of transmigration and the reader is left to harmonize them as he can."

In arguing thus, Professor Nettleship assumes that this mythology is to be taken literally as the expression of Virgil's religious experiences. Let us then examine the plausibility of this assumption.

Cicero in his 'Nat. Deorum' says: There was not left an old woman foolish enough to fear the deep dwellings of Orcus. "No one", claims Seneca, "is foolish enough to fear Cerberus and the phantoms which appear in the form of skeletons." That there are Manes", says Juvenal, "a subterranean kingdom, a ferry-man armed with a pole... these are things in which everyone had ceased to believe except very young children." Discounting the skepticism of Cicero, the difference in generation with regard to Seneca, and the satirical temperament of Juvenal, we still cannot conceive of Virgil accepting as literal truth a mythology so emphatically discredited by the writers just quoted, and so barbarous to the aesthetic spiritual religion of Virgil. Moreover, Virgil himself said in his Georgics: Happy is he who... has trodden under foot all idle fears and inexorable Destiny, and the fear of devouring Acheron.

Virgil, in our opinion, introduced this eschatological mythology not because of personal belief, but rather in imitation of the descent of Homer's hero into the nether world. The doctrine of transmigration, put in the mouth of Anchises, is more akin to Virgil's inner nature because of its profound poetic appeal and its deep spiritual implications.

Only one word more. Having seen Virgil as a religious teacher we must not forget that Virgil was also an artist. It was the artistic element in him which raised him to the lofty heights of religious purity. He was a teacher, a historian, but above all a poet. With true characteristic insight does Dr. Fowler say of Virgil "that learning, legend, philosophy, religion, whatever in the whole range of human thought and fancy entered his mind, emerged from it as poetry and poetry only."

BOOKS

ORTHODOXY VS. REFORM

The Jewish Library, Second Series
 Edited by Leo Jung, Ph. D.
 Bloch Publishing Co., New York, 1930, 295 pp.

Religion in a Changing World
 By Abba Hillel Silver, D.D., Litt. D.
 Richard R. Smith, Inc., New York, 1930, 204 pp.

By HUGO MANTEL

IT is characteristic of our age that books dealing with the position of religion in modern times should appear from time to time. The idea that there is a conflict between science and religion has long been abandoned. In the nineteenth century, when the clash occurred, there seemed to be no reconciliation. Today, however, the materialistic point of view has been tested and found unsatisfactory. By no means has this view gained universal recognition, but the attitude that is prevalent today among thoughtful people is, that the emotions and the mode of life which religion inspires, are indispensable to civilization. Thus we find Edmond Fleg and Nathan Birnbaum (the leader of the Jewish intellectuals in Central Europe) returning to Judaism, and a number of the leading French intellectuals embracing Catholicism.

Of the two books at hand, the one was written by a prominent exponent of Reform Judaism in this country, and the other by a number of rabbis and scientists of the orthodox faith. Dr. Silver's book deals with religion in general, while the Jewish Library has as its aim the dissemination of the ideas and ideals of orthodox Judaism. The latter book has the obvious advantage over the former in that it was written by men who have specialized in the field they are discussing. Thus, an essay on Faith and Science by a scientist like Dr. M. L. Isaacs is more exact, detailed and convincing than the general remarks on the subject by an amateur in Science.

Dr. Silver's book is written in a clear style

and in a logical order. He describes the political, social and intellectual situation today in simple, concise statements. Subjects are dismissed after a few paragraphs, without leading the reader into laborious reasoning; the author is informative and authoritative rather than stimulating. It seems, therefore, that the chapters in the book have been intended to be delivered from the pulpit. Yet as sermons they are not passionate enough; they are too objective and coldly intellectual. The impression is gained that they are profound sermons but shallow essays. The cynic may say, with a degree of truth, that they are neither good sermons nor worth-while lectures. Still, the chapters have a value, as representing a unique type of sermon with a charm of its own.

If the two books are taken as representative of the two factions of religious Jewry, then orthodoxy gains by the comparison. Dr. Silver's Religion in our changing world is a very feeble thing, indeed. The doctrine of Reform Judaism is that religion gives everything to man yet demands of him almost nothing; it orientates him in the world, it offers him an optimistic point of view, but as far as regulating his conduct is concerned, it is satisfied with a minimum. The way of the world, though, experience has taught us, is a give-and-take proposition; if one sacrifices nothing, one gets nothing. The impression is reinforced that Reform Judaism is a concession to those Jews who, while psychologically incapable of parting with Judaism, are unwilling to abide by its age-old traditions.

True, Dr. Silver is rather conservative in his views. He upholds the old morality, the stability of marriage, and opposes "unreasonable change". (Whom would the doctor trust to discriminate between what is reasonable and what is not?) His conservatism, however, is based, not on faith and tradition, but on his own experience and reasoning. Yet such basis is a very weak one for religion. For there is no earthly reason why others should not try to see things for themselves, and thus reach conclusions other than those entertained by the rabbi. There are times, too, when his logic may be contested. He assumes, for instance, that any departure from the traditional conception of our attitude toward G-d, of human relationship, of our purpose in life, has the only alternative of regarding life as a comedy or a tragedy or a farce. Such attitudes, he continues, fail to inspire men to become "builders of the earth, teachers, prophets, fashioners of new truth and new beauty." These statements are contradicted by fact. Artists, poets, social reformers, need not always subscribe to the doctrines of any one established religion. Devotion to humanity and to human happiness may be independent of one's religious convictions.

Dr. Silver, moreover, never mentions the Jewish religion. He always speaks of religion in general, in essence. The doctor, no doubt, had his own reasons for doing this. Yet we cannot help being reminded that this is characteristic of all reformed Jews. These Jews prefer to be "cosmopolitan" in their religion. Let there be no mistake about the matter. Had they been called Episcopalians or Baptists, they would have boasted of their particularism. Judaism, however, smacks of Eastern Europeans, of the "undesirable" and the "inferior" race; tactful people avoid the use of such "provoking" terms. That from such "tactfulness" there is but one step towards assimilation is more than evident.

In contrast, the Jewish Library is written by men thoroughly conscious and proud of their Jewishness. They are burning with enthusiasm towards everything that is Jewish. Such attitude, it has never been doubted, is the only safe course in preserving Judaism.

Again, faith and tradition are frankly accepted and are merely shown to have worked well and to be superior to all possible substitutes. Religion is thus an impregnable factor in both preserving order and raising the spiritual standards of the people.

In a sound and wholesome style, Dr. Hertz, the Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, expounds the constructive forces of the Fundamental Ideals and Proclamations of Judaism. He shows how the idea of the unity G-d is bound with right living and with the ultimate hopes of humanity. "Polytheism broke the unity of man; it gave religious sanction to the foulest practices... Ethical monotheism is Messianic. Righteousness, it proclaims, is a cosmic force; and, consequently, what ought to be, must be and will be." He cites the emphasis that Judaism has laid upon the proper upbringing of children, upon the affection between children and parents, and upon the freedom of, and reverence for, women. The Oral Law, he states, "forms the soul of Judaism, and gives it individuality and uniqueness among the living faiths of men." In contrasting the traditional mode of living with "Modern Life," he points to the danger that the latter may bring upon humanity. "... we must not forget that modern life tends to the destruction of the family, the cheapening of human life, the loss of all belief in absolute values, be they of religion or of morality." Mankind, Judaism holds, does not live in a world of ideas only. Men and women, as we know them, cannot dispense with symbols that give tangibility to ideas, etc."

One of the features that commend the Jewish Library, is that it is written by a number of authors, each one contributing his own individuality. This not only offers variety, but also points out in a very real manner that Judaism may suit personalities of diverse types. As a result we have the exactness and clarity of a mind like Dr. Jung's, the editor of the series, projected in his essay on "What Is Orthodox Judaism?" In a succinct style he compresses into a few paragraphs what Orthodox Judaism offers to Jews both as individuals and as a nation. He then deals with the modern problems that face Orthodoxy, or

Torah-true Judaism, as he prefers to call it. Describing eloquently the tragedy of the modern man—during the week he is a mere machine, on Sunday he attempts to escape his worries by giving himself up to violent pleasures—the rabbi continues: "... a restless week is followed by a restless Sunday, an exciting Sunday by a hard week, and the strain of our vital forces becomes tremendous. The Jews in the Torah have been given a day of rest that is different from any other day of rest... On the Sabbath, the Torah-true Jew not only rests but he is free from the strain of the mechanical devices of industry. The superficial mind considers it ludicrous that we are forbidden to press an electric button on the Sabbath, to answer the telephone, to write, to ride, to buy, to handle money. All these prohibitions, they feel, in modern times, should be done away with. These objectors do not realize the tremendous protection afforded us by these strict enactments. On the Sabbath, by reason of these strict laws, the Jew is freed from the life-destroying strain which modern industrial life has put upon him. On Shabbos, the Jew has a *neschama yethera*, an "extra soul" which revitalizes his heart and mind. It is a day which affords his creative genius opportunity for reassertion of hopes and aspirations." After presenting the Jewish conception of marriage and of social justice, he proceeds to discuss the Jewish Question. Here he makes a statement which so remarkably expresses the attitude of all traditional Jews and which has been their rock throughout the ages: "Anti-Semitism, intolerance, are Gentile problems. Ours is the task to raise Jewry to the heights of Judaism."

Other high-lights of the series are the fascinating chapter by the Reverend Dr. Gaster on the Romance of the Hebrew Alphabet, The Centrality of Palestine in Jewish Life by Dr. David De Sola Pool, Faith and Science by Dr. Moses L. Isaacs, Schechita by Dr. M. S. Lieber, a summary of Bachya's Duties of the Heart by the Rev. E. Collins, Scientific Aspects of the Jewish Dietary Laws by Dr. D. I. Macht, and the genial application of judicial reasoning to The Great Preamble—a Rereading of Genesis by Prof. Nathan Isaacs of Harvard University.

The Jewish Library is doing fine service in disseminating the orthodox ideal in American Jewry. Let us hope that it will grow. The powers of Orthodoxy in this country

and abroad have by far not yet been exhausted. If these essays will be backed by activity in the field of propagating tradition, Judaism may yet come to its own even in this country.

Mr. LEWISOHN'S VIEW ON MARRIAGE

STEPHEN ESCOTT

By LUDWIG LEWISOHN

By LOUIS BARISHNIKOFF

STEPHEN ESCOTT, a psychological novel, treats of the much-discussed problem of sex relations with a deep penetrating vision, an idealistic temperament and a humane spirit. The discussions are never marred by platitudes or slovenliness. The language is frank and emphatic; always vivid and stimulating to both the emotion and the mind.

Lewisohn casts an all-embracing commentary on modern love and marriage in the form of a story told by Stephen Escott.

Stephen Escott is an American youth brought up by parents to whom sex is associated with filth and sin. Because of his desire for sexual satisfaction, Escott, falls in love with Dorothy, a girl who typifies American young womanhood. Stephen defies her. He makes romantic love to her in the solitude of his walks and dreams. He thinks at once of the possibilities of marriage, and soon casts his sail on the high sea of matrimony.

The Escott marriage assumes on the surface a countenance of contentment. Theirs is apparently a pleasant home and there are children; but husband and wife are miserable. The man takes refuge in sensual dreams, the women in bitterness which turns to illness. She is always pale, quiet and downtrodden, and has about her a certain dignified pathos. She cannot resign herself to the degradation to which the holy institution of marriage has been debased. She fears all thought of the biological consequences marriage involves—not because she is revolutionary, but because she is pure, frail and modest. She despises Mrs. Sampson, the Jewess, who is plump and pregnant. She cannot bear her jollity and calm acceptance of everything "negative" marriage offers. Mrs. Escott does not complain much to Stephen. She is, however, sad and sullen and does not realize that her sad-eyed silence must be acutely irritating to Stephen. We become aware of his feelings at her death. He immediately goes in search of Beatrice, a woman who can offer him physical delight and sensual satisfaction.

In Beatrice, Lewisohn offers a symbolical study of woman's position when she has separated herself from the herd. She does not marry because she refuses to be dominated by man. She drives love back to its purely physiological limits. Love in the higher sense has no place in her life. Thus she may play, but must forget. Love fills only a brief hour in her life while her other hours are passed without tenderness, solicitude, companionship or affection. She is driven from situation to situation not by her strength, but by her weakness, not by her crude power but by her spiritual and emotional impotence. Escott fails to extract any contentment from his companionship with Beatrice and settles into a life of resignation.

Escott's friend and law-partner, David Sampson is blest by a happy marriage which has been made and kept perfect by acts of will rather than by good luck which most people regard as the cause of happiness in marriage.

Escott's and Sampson's practice as divorce lawyers brings them into touch with many phases of American marriage. Escott's understanding ripens with his practice, under David's wise counsel. The last cause handled by the firm is the defense of Paul Gordon for the murder of his wife's lover. Gordon's wife has been for him the fulfillment of a yearning for beauty. From his passion for her his poetry has sprung. Incapable of such love, she allows herself to be seduced into a love affair with a man who will take anything brief and cheap. In defense of his poetic ideals of love, Gordon kills him.

Lewisohn thus indicates that passion, romance and adventure of love are being grossly overestimated and that this age, with its curious psychological cross-currents and its unhappy competition between the sexes, is especially unfavorable to the poetry of the passions. He believes that woman should behave exactly as woman has always functioned—as tradition has moulded her. He sympathizes with the individualistic woman, but sincerely and stringently announces that woman must let her instincts become neither atrophied nor perverted, but use them under strict intellectual control.

Through the Escotts, Lewisohn shows the appalling results of sex ignorance; through Paul Gordon and his wife we see the futility of passionate love and of poetic romance. Through the Sampsons, Lewisohn points to his thorough belief in the Jewish view that the basic instinct for marriage is not sexual desire but reproduction.

THE DUAL CHARACTER OF THE JEW THE LAST DAYS OF SHYLOCK

By LUDWIG LEWISOHN

Harpers & Bros.

By HUGO MANTEL

In *The Last Days of Shylock*, Lewisohn attempts to describe the life of Shylock from the point where Shakespeare left him. After the formal baptism which was forced upon him by the court of Venice, he escapes from the town and settles in Constantinople. His life there is among Jews only and we see before us an entirely different Shylock. This divergence from the original character of Shylock has moved many to censure Lewisohn's novel as a pious wish to vindicate the Jews. His wish was not realized, it is claimed, because the original character disappears in the novel and another Jew, Reb Shylock, comes upon the scene. Others, on the contrary, criticize Lewisohn on the ground that he entirely missed Shakespeare's point. Shylock, they say, was never intended to represent any living human being; he was a mere buffoon whose behavior, claim and fate were supposed to amuse the public.

One can hardly be patient with this last attitude. Shakespeare's characters, be they buffoons or not, are always taken from life. One of the aspects of the genius of Shakespeare, as is well known, is that even his most eccentric characters, under the most fantastic conditions, are full-blooded human beings. The assertion that Shakespeare never saw a Jew is somewhat improbable in the light of the recent discovery of Sir Sidney Lee and the late Lucien Wolf that there was never a time even before Cromwell when there were no Jews in London. It is, I believe, by no means a compliment to Shakespeare to suppose that he was not curious enough to get acquainted with this rare type of people.

That he did not appreciate the real character of the Jews needs no further discussion. He looked upon the Jew as one who is incapable of virtue, whose heart is the hardest thing in the world (Merchant of Venice, Act IV, Scene I) and who is the "very devil incarnate". (Lancelot in Act II, Scene II). Yet this view was nothing but the general attitude of his age toward the Jew.

If Shakespeare gave a very vivid and true picture of how the Christian world regarded the Jew, Lewisohn carries us to the Jewish world and invites us to note the Jew there. The Christians saw in Shylock a base creature, crafty and cruel, selfish and materialistic; among the Jews, however, he was pious and charitable, patient and wise. In the Ghetto, he walked among friends; outside it, he dealt with enemies, with people of a different attitude towards life, with men who considered him no more than a dog. His reaction towards people, therefore, was of a dual character. To the Christian who called him dog and spit upon him and spurned him, he retorted with a demand for a pound of flesh as surety; his fellow Jews, however, who respected him and sympathized with him, received from him kindness and devotion.

Thus, while Lewisohn admits all that Shakespeare had to say about the Jews, he insists that that was a one-sided picture of them, a description of their so-called "secondary nature". He points out that although the Gentiles saw in the Jew a miser and observed also his attachment to his people, they did not recognize the connection between these two characteristics. The reason why the Jew sought wealth, Lewisohn explains, was his desire to make the position of his community secure. It was money that the dukes exacted of the Jews and it was money with which princes could be bribed into the withdrawal of harsh proclamations.

Again, while Shakespeare justifies, in a way, the revenge of the Jew, and attributes it to his manliness, Lewisohn makes it clear that vengeance was not the rule with Jews. Shylock's desire for revenge was a mere tem-

porary outbreak after a long chain of insults and injuries had been hurled at him. Jews have been so crushed by the Gentiles that they took persecution as a matter of fact and merely hoped that ultimately the oppressors would change.

As for the novel itself, *The Last Days of Shylock* both in style and content, succeeds in creating an atmosphere of medievalism. Historic characters and events are called to life, and Jewish life and suffering become vivid before us. The book is a real contribution to modern Jewish literature.

OUR TIMES REFLECTED

MADMAN'S DRUM

A novel in woodcuts

By LYNN WARD

By HUGO MANTEL

This novel is the result of an experiment. In a series of woodcuts the author relates the story of a man who cuts himself off from the turmoil of life and absorbs himself in his books, thus bringing about the destruction of his family. His youthful wife, whom he had neglected, becomes faithless to him and, being keenly sensitive, commits suicide. His elder daughter, an idealist like her father, falls in love with a communist who becomes the scape-goat of politicians and is tried for murder. The girl's father vainly appears before the court to prove conclusively the innocence of the man; the influence of the politicians is stronger and the verdict is capital punishment. The unhappy girl follows her lover to the other world. The younger daughter who, due to the father's negligence and the mother's early death had grown up without proper breeding, is ultimately led astray. The father finally recognizes the fallacy of leading a secluded life and throws himself into the stream of life.

The story is simple and its moral is plain. A novel in this form, being intended for the general public, must of necessity be simple; subtleties and complications, either in theme or in form, are not practical. The pictures must be vivid and suggestive.

The great disadvantage of a novel in this form is, that style, which so powerfully reflects the individuality of the author, is relatively lacking. All we can gather from the book are some of his views: that he abandoned religion, that he is a social iconoclast. A psychoanalyst might undertake to analyze the character of the author of such an original work, but such activity lies outside of our scope.

One cannot help thinking that this form of presenting novels typifies, in some important aspects, our entire age. We are a fast lot and an impatient one. We sweep through the pages of novels, omit descriptions of landscapes and of idyllic life but devour the plot and lose our breath when somebody's life is at stake. The "talkies" are our ideal. There we do not even have to read; scenes from the underworld, from upper society, from the end of the world—stories unreal, bizarre and absurd—are presented to us in a matter-of-fact way and we are pleased.

This form of novel, moreover, represents

our era from another angle. A story in drawing can be understood by people in all parts of the world, irrespective of the language spoken by them. The post-war movement to foster an international spirit is quite in conformity with this form of novel-writing. It is unlikely, however, that this sort of book will in any way advance the cause. In order to sympathize with another nation, one must appreciate its spirit, and this insight into the spirit of another nation cannot be gotten without words, idioms and style; for through them one perceives the subtleties, idiosyncrasies and inner struggles of a people. A speechless book will not do. But is not this very failure characteristic of all the effort expended today on the establishment of universal peace?

In our machine-age everybody is trying to wipe out all individual distinctions; our aim is mental equality, standardization of habits, and conformity. In concealing his own character, the author of this book is typical of the age.

CLASSIFICATION

By LOUIS ENGELBERG

After many forays into the various centers of "canned" education in our cultural metropolis, I have become more and more convinced of the hypermechanical nature of our system of learning. Every daily recitation, every weekly quiz is marred by that inevitable query: into how many groups can so and so be divided? Every final examination consists of something like ten classification questions, though once in a while some original instructor may vary the monotony by giving only nine classifications and perhaps one differentiation. It is to avenge myself upon these many pedagogues for having transformed me into a mimicking puppet, a memorizer of category and subdivision names, that I am turning the tables—and in a last desperate rally, hope to gain an everlasting triumph. It is to receive that satisfaction emanating from a task well done that I pro-

pose to give the instructor a dose of his own medicine—and classify him!

In carrying out my design I shall be as subjective as possible, thus affording myself a protective shelter from the many potential objectors who surround me. I shall thus be able to answer any query by that impregnable reply, "Well, that's the way it appears to me." For the sake of convenience, moreover, I shall consider you, dear reader, a pal of mine attending classes with me at one of our New York Universities—hoping against hope that we procure a degree of some sort.

We may divide all instructors into three classes: The young, the middle aged, and the old; that is, the inexperienced, the disillusioned, and those having relaxed into complete placidity. But let us leave abstractions and come down to facts.

As the gong sounds for our first intellectual bout, we meet Instructor A—the youthful representative of our categorical division. A well-dressed chap, sporting a newly raised mustache, proudly struts before us. Overbubbling with enthusiasm and chock-full of confidence, he boldly flaunts his Master's degree. Just as Old Glory, caught by the wind, waves its tail end more vigorously than its others parts, just so does he ostentatiously display the degree that he had garnered. He immediately lets us feel the iron hand of authority by assigning fifty pages in the text for the next day's assignment. To strengthen his so recently acquired power, he reads a chapter from a standard text book, and literally tears it to pieces, destroying argument after argument with infallible logic. Fortunately we are saved from further abuse at the hand of this tyrant by that well-known tocsin, so heartily welcomed by fallen boxers and tired students.

Assistant Professor B, next on our calling card, is a well-built, iron-jawed Irishman who has served his four-years sentence at Yale. Even yet, how sadly does he gaze at his Phi Beta Kappa pin, mournfully lamenting the fact that it doesn't mean what it used to! A typical middle-aged professor, he has long given up the idea that he will make the average student work, and instead, concentrates upon his mental faculties with the hope of making him think logically. Forcefully he develops his economic theory in a coherent fashion from the very rock bottom. Vainly he tries to stimulate the gray matter in irresponsible skulls, only to be met with resonant snores—disturbed finally by the sharp ring of the bell announcing the end of the period.

The change is welcome for more than one reason. Our inferiority complexes have had dominated us in the presence of these despots, but now we cheerfully regain our composure upon entering the classroom of Professor C—a scholar and a gentleman, whose fifty years of educational service had taught him to endure the pangs of teaching with complacency. Unlike his predecessor he had given up the hope of making students either work or think, and had adopted as a *modus vivendi* a passive lecture method in which he labored diligently—while the students praised his eloquence.

This life was soon to come to an abrupt halt. As February ushered in the examination period, all our sources of shelter were invaded. The youthful and pretentious instructor bore a sarcastic look that was sure to spell disaster to many an aspiring Phi Beta Kappa man. The Assistant Professor who had so vainly endeavored to put his economics across logically, wore a smile of triumph as he politely remarked: "Well, you wouldn't listen to me, so now you'll sweat instead." And even the old professor, our pride and fortress, became a mere scholar— forfeiting the gentleman in his title by that look of revenge which demanded retribution for wasted energy during an entire semester.

What can we poor students do in the face of such odds? We came back the next day like sheep being led to the slaughter in an attempt to pass the exams. Of the thirty questions which I had to answer, every one was of the classification type!

At any rate I have gained revenge for the three failures that my report card showed. What else can a poor, downtrodden, puppetized student expect?

WINTER THOUGHTS

By ABRAHAM S. GUTERMAN

The dirty gray of long-lying snow greets the eye, broken here and there by the jagged crest of a lonely rock as it juts out from the mantle of nature, as if definitely refusing its inevitable burial. In the distance the black-brown wall of the forest is set against the dull grey sky, and the many shaped trees, welded into one ominous mass of background, rise majestically and sombrely in the distance.

Approaching that forest by the difficult snow covered trails, I gradually discern the individuality of the symmetrical fir and the staunchness of the tiny shrub, the strength of the lasting oak, the depth of the mournful willow, the beauty of the upright maple, and the indomitable persistence of the tiny fern. The blackness takes on new charm. Every tuft of withered grass, every tiny bed of worn and emaciated moss seems to tell its own tale, and seems to cry forth that it could outlast the pine, and fir and maple, that it could withstand the rigor of any clime, and live to feel again the warmth of summer, the pleasant rays of color-giving sunshine, the life-giving showers, to hear the mellow song of the birds, and the busy chatter of the beasts.

The thoughts of summer seem sometimes like vain groping hopes, hopes which though genuine seem to lose their true ring in the long and seemingly endless anticipation of their realization. But to the shrub, to the fern, to the more impressive rulers of this vast expanse, patience is a byword. For by what other imaginable quality could they survive that dreary period of cold and storm, of hardship and seeming death? Tall, short, stocky, thin, the forest's many shapes and sizes stand reared against the dark gray sky solemnly watching the never-ending march of the seasons, the constructive and destructive forces of nature at work, the ever-present elements battling for control and leaving desolation in their wake, the clash of the thunder, the flash of lightning, the angry earth spitting fire when aroused, or the sudden unexpected hunger of that earth when it opens wide its

mouth and swallows up a part of its none too extensive surface . . .

* * *

As I gaze at this monument of nature, the panorama of struggling humanity passes before me. All are there, the tall and the short, the large and the small, the proud and the humble, the majestic and the servile. And when we regard humanity from a distance like the forest it seems firm and rock-ribbed with never a flaw in its rising and solid grandeur. When we come closer, however, we see that what seemed a solid mass breaks up into many isolated factors, many individual shoots which despite their common root in Mother Earth struggle for subsistence, each in its own way. The splendor of the panorama would be broken were each shoot, each bush, each tree separated from its neighbors, yet all could still subsist in life even though standing thus alone without beauty or harmony. Indeed, it seems as if some great Guiding Hand has joined these in one sphere so that their mutual interdependence may elevate the beauty and culture and life of all. In the arrangement of His plan He provided the changing seasons, the period of boom, and the period of depression, of plenty and of want, but He also provided the patience which springs from hope, from ambition, from faith. With all this, however, many a staunch tuft of grass is broken and many a brave heart's blood is split in the never-ending struggle for existence.

Then too, when a tornado rushes upon the scene, the saplings weather the storm, and though scarred and a little bent, remain firm, while those whose lofty tops seem to scrape the very sky itself fall and crash before the tornado's force, and their very resistance helps hew them down like mere tinder wood.

Youth welcomes the battle of life and defies all opposing forces, but old age recedes and wilts, and yields under the weight of the volley, gradually breaks with the strain, and in complete surrender finds everlasting peace.

GOETHE AND THE JEWS

By JACOB AGUSHEVITZ

ON March 22, 1932, the one hundredth anniversary of Goethe will be celebrated. In anticipation of this event, numerous books and articles concerning the life and works of this versatile genius have already been published all over the world. For us Jews it is of special importance to note the attitude of this great European toward our people. Though his judgment, like that of all humans, may not be infallible, his view is characteristic of the German intellectuals of his generation.

For Goethe, the greatest literary exponent of the nineteenth century, is to the Germans more than their greatest poet; he is their most representative intellectual figure. They regard him as their model, as the man who, in life and works, ideas and ideals, has best expressed their emotions and aspirations. He is, so to speak, the most German of all the German poets.

By studying the attitude of Goethe towards the Jews, we might be able to cast light upon the attitude of the most enlightened German towards his Jewish neighbor in the generation after Mendelssohn.

Goethe's contact with things Jewish began rather early in his life. In conformity with the general practice of the time, his early education included also a study of the Bible. His young imagination often centered around Biblical heroes, and the plays and poems of his early life are, at times, drawn from Biblical sources. The impression that Goethe seems to have obtained from the Bible was not at all fair to the Hebrew People. "The Israelites, as their prophets, judges and leaders continually reproached them, were never worth much."

Yet the Bible was not the exclusive source of Goethe's knowledge of the Jews. In his native town, Frankfurt on the Main, he could not help but come in close contact with the Jews. As a child, he was accustomed to jeer at the quaint, bearded, stooping figures dressed in long Oriental cloaks with those

shapeless yellow badges on the backs, that passed hurriedly and timidly through the hostile streets of the city. In his childhood, he imbibed the common legends telling of the cruel Jewish atrocities committed on helpless Christian babes. "The narrowness, the dirt, the noise of the Jewish Ghetto, the accent of an unhappy language"—all together made the most unpleasant impression.

The humanitarianism and tolerance of the poet, however, became apparent very early. He frequently made conscious efforts to free himself from his anti-Jewish prejudices. At the age of twelve, he began visiting the Jewish Ghetto with the object of acquainting himself with Jewish customs and manners. For a time he even applied himself to the study of both Hebrew and Yiddish. However, he never quite succeeded in learning Yiddish. His only production in that tongue, "The Jewish Sermon," containing but two Hebrew words and few idiomatic Yiddish expressions, should be regarded, according to Professor Mark Waldman, as an attempt at being humorous rather than as a serious rendering of a Jewish legend.

In his matured years, Goethe continued to study Jewish history. Riemer, one of the most intimate friends of Goethe, said: "Goethe had devoted himself to the study of the Jewish nation from its beginnings, had correctly grasped the typical Jewish characteristics and had put in the proper light the peculiar Jewish traits that fashioned its nature, constitution, and fate." Though this statement cannot be taken at its face value, yet it is evident that Goethe perseveringly and sincerely endeavored to comprehend the Jewish character.

While it is indisputable that Goethe consciously attempted to fathom the Jewish soul, it is impossible for an impartial judge to agree with Riemer that Goethe succeeded in "putting the peculiar Jewish traits" in the proper light. Goethe's idea of the Jewish people is far from justifying Riemer's contention. Goethe regarded the Jewish people as a base,

ignoble lot, "possessing but few virtues and most of the failings of other nations." The Jews, he thought, never understood or appreciated their great men. "You need only one beggar-Jew in order to deride a God on the cross." The real qualities of the Jew remained for him a sealed book. Their humanitarianism, their spiritual strength, their thirst for knowledge, never gained recognition by the poet.

To his mind, the Jews were self-seeking and lazy. In spite of his knowledge that the Jews were forced to resort to usury as the only means of subsistence left to them by the Christian rulers, he seems to have regarded usury as the natural occupation of the Jewish people. All through his works, a Jew is synonymous with a usurer. Madame Melina pawned her things to a Jew from whom she received them for her theatrical performances in return for large payments. Jews are also numbered among Knight Gurt's obstacles; "Then came Jews with notes of old debts." Or as in *Faust*, "The Jew will not spare me, who anticipates beforehand." Again, "A Jew and a king can do it (injustice) too."

This lack of faith in the Jewish people is best displayed in Goethe's reluctance to apply to the Jews, in the immediate future, the great principles of toleration and forbearance. Though very liberal in theory, he was very conservative in practice. He feared the Jews were still too immoral and too corrupt to enjoy the blessing of equality and citizenship. Thus we find that the poet,—generally a great humanitarian who labored to have the great drama of tolerance "*Nathan The Wise*" produced on the German stage,—was capable of approving of the law in Jena that no Jew be allowed to stay there overnight. On the one hand, we hear him saying: "May the emotions of tolerance and forbearance expressed in Lessing's drama remain cherished and holy to the German people". On the other hand, we find him quite cool with regard to the strivings of the Frankfurt Jews for emancipation. Unfortunately Goethe was unequal to the task of completely freeing himself from the anti-Jewish prejudices which he had absorbed in his childhood. His intelligence, so potent in other ways, was only capable of glossing these sentiments over and conferring upon them a semblance of rationalism.

The humanitarianism of the poet, how-

ever, often found warmer expressions. He thundered indignantly against those "who believed to have no obligations toward a large number of human beings, simply because these were Jewish." He labored to expunge anti-Semitic propaganda from the German stage. "It is disgraceful that a nation, which has contributed so much to science and art, should be put to the pillory." No hateful emotions towards the Jews are shown or meant in any of his plays; and if Jews were sometimes shown in a ludicrous light, it was because no realistic picture of German life in Goethe's days could be produced without the Jews being painted in comical fashion. The Jews in Germany were then more than a religious sect. They were at the lowest rung in the social ladder identified by their occupation, customs, and manners at least as much as by their religion.

The influence of Jewish thinkers upon Goethe was of special importance. The pantheistic philosophy of Spinoza became the foundation of his outlook upon the universe; he considered the universe as "the living garment of G-d."

The name of the Jew E. W. Behrsh is never omitted by Goethe's biographers. This youthful, "congenial and original" friend guided him in his first worthwhile attempts at poetry.

In justice to Goethe it must be stated that he never allowed his anti-Jewish prejudices to extend to any individual Jewish celebrity. No Jewish poet or artist ever found Goethe's doors closed to him on account of his nationality. Moses Mendelssohn, as well as Solomon Maimon—the great Jewish intellectuals of the time known to the Gentile world—were enthusiastically admired by Goethe. Michael Beer, a Jewish dramatist, was substantially aided by him. Moritz Oppenheimer, a Jewish artist, found a helping and encouraging hand in Goethe. The Jewish ladies of the aristocracy of Berlin were greatly admired by Goethe for their ready wit and penetrating intelligence.

In brief, Goethe's view of the Jews was the natural result of his early education. Having been reared in an anti-Jewish atmosphere, his discriminating intelligence coming at maturity was unable totally to uproot his already firmly established prejudices. The humanitarianism of the great poet, however, manifested itself in his respecting merit and condoling suffering no matter where he found it.

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THIS AND THAT

It was early in the apple-selling days—December the eighteenth to be exact—that our stalwart, young gladiators of the voice, gesture, and fact, argued about unemployment insurance with the boys from City College. The battle royal was staged in our own spacious auditorium in the presence of a few hundred people. It was a glorious debate. We won.

Our men, Abe Guterman, Nathan Jacobson, and "Srully" Upbin, valiantly defended the negative side of the resolution *that the several States adopt a system of compulsory unemployment insurance*. Guterman's strong, clear voice, Jacobson's shrewd arguments, and Upbin's gestures were too much for our opponents. We beat them aptly.

The debate was attended by quite a number of celebrities. The judges were Attorney Silver, Dr. Boylan of George Washington High School, and Congressman William I. Sirovich. The latter honored the assembly with a talk on unemployment before announcing the decision. President Dr. Revel, Dean Safir, Professor Palmer and Dr. Lipitzin were down, and so were we all, in all our glory.

Thus we won our first inter-collegiate debate, and gave City College its only defeat of the season.

Lag B'Omer last, we trekked down to Van Cortlandt Park and engaged in a gala ball-game. Our opponents were the Yeshiva team. For the sake of competition we were the College team. (We had to differentiate, delicately, to be sure, our Yeshiva self from our College self for that day, for the sake of a baseball game!)

The game itself was thrilling, though we lost, inheriting the tail-end of a six to three score. It was great fun to see Rabbi "Bob" Marcus pitching, and Rabbi "Bill" Tarshish playing shortstop for the Yeshiva team. So was it pleasing to see the chassidic Sherman, and the scholarly Engelberg playing catcher and first-base, respectively, for us.

During the past College year there were a few real, honest-to-goodness battles between the Frosh and the Sophs. The clever Frosh had the upper hand in most of these skirm-

ishes; and though the Sophs were the better "hazers", the Frosh beat them badly both in basket-ball and in baseball. Yes, we're proud of our Freshmen.

The Swimming Team didn't accomplish much this year. Evidently, our boys prefer to do their swimming in the "Sea of the Talmud."

Chanukah was celebrated in true fashion by us this year. Services were held and candles were kindled, every evening in the Science Lecture Hall, and the walls of the College resounded nightly with the singing of Ma'oz Tzur Yeshua'si . . .

This year, too, a few general assemblies were held in the Science Lecture Hall under the auspices of the Students' Council, which is becoming quite a powerful factor in the College. Good work!

J. K.

N E W S

In view of the fact that the Yeshiva Library consists mainly of Judaica, Dr. Safir, at the beginning of the year, suggested that the Students Council form a library of its own and thus obtain the books prescribed as outside reading in the various subjects. As the students responded generously in supplying the funds, books were ordered and a library-room was prepared on the fourth floor. Hyman Israel was appointed librarian.

We are told that the Yeshiva College has received a donation of 3500 books and that 5000 more books are coming in; that the Yeshiva library will be extended into an adjoining room to fit the new requirements. Needless to say, the students will heartily welcome this change.

The faculty of the Yeshiva College will be increased next year with some eminent men. The appointments of Dr. L. W. Max, Professor of Psychology of N. Y. U. and of Dr. Leo Jung, Professor of Jewish Ethics, have been made public. Other appointments will follow.

The staff of the Masmid expresses its gratitude to Mr. Adolph Nadich for his valuable assistance to the Business Manager in securing ads.

ATHLETIC NEWS

One evening, a few months ago, a group of our students got together and started a movement of forming athletic teams to represent our Alma Mater. With the official approval of the office and the Student's Council, a basketball team was organized under the guidance of L. Izenstein as captain. Before a record crowd in Riets's Hall gymnasium, we opened our season. Our opponent was the team representing the Teacher's Institute. At the end of the first half we were trailing with the score 10-7 against us. With renewed vigor, our boys came back in the second half to stage a fighting comeback to end up finally as the victor. When the final gong was sounded we were ahead by the close score—20-18. Our team showed a great amount of team work. This well-oiled machine seemed destined for a successful season.

We broke into the losing column when we opposed the Washington Heights Big Five—and big they sure did appear. After a hard-fought struggle with the score tied most of the way, we ended up on the lower end of the score 35-30. Though opposing a much more experienced quintet we put up a good fight, and it was only in the last few minutes of play when, worn by the pace set by our superior opponents, our boys lost ground and the others rose to victory. Credit is due, however, to the entire team for the fighting spirit which was shown throughout.

A word should be said about the game with our life-long rival the S. O. Y. There is always a hard-fought battle when the collegiates oppose the prospective Rabbis. In this game we outclassed our opponents and came through with a 30-18 victory. Again the Y. C. varsity raise the name of our Alma Mater to victory.

Games were played also with the Jewish Theological Seminary, The Flashes, Our Saviours Atonement, and a return game with the Teacher Institute. We ended a successful season with a record of three wins and four losses for a percentage of 428. The members of the varsity were L. Engleberg, A. Guterman, H. Steinberg, A. Troy, J. Eisenberg and L. Izenstein.

In these contests the class of '34 defeated all its opponents and led the league. Among the stars of the freshman team were Albert Troy, Joseph Eisenberg, Abraham Chill and Max Marcus. Judging from the performances displayed by this team, there is plenty of material for some good varsity teams in the future.

With the coming of Spring and the baseball season, some of this athletic enthusiasm was transferred from the polished surface to the Yeshiva Stadium. For some reason or other, there was no official varsity baseball team formed. Class games were played and again the freshman teams showed their athletic superiority over the rest of the college. An unofficial varsity team opposed the S. O. Y. nine. In this game, our opponents wreaked revenge for their defeat on the basketball floor. Our loss showed the result of the lack of practice.

Thus we close a fairly successful year of sports. We have discovered a considerable amount of ability and the prospects for future teams are excellent.

—L. I.

CHILD—LIFE

(continued from page 14)

At last Schmulikel turned his face and looked at Susanna. She was laughing, laughing at his disgrace. A bitter feeling came into his heart . . . against the world and against everybody. He wished that a pit might open under him and swallow him as had happened to Korach and his followers. His eyes filled with tears and he wept bitterly.

Night is quickly coming on. I gaze into the growing darkness and think of the long ago when I thought and felt like Schmulikel. A happy youth, when such trifling episodes were epochs in my life, when shabby things were full of color, and dull events were ever full of meaning! Oh, happy days when mystery was lurking in every nook and corner. Oh, glorious, fearful evenings when the linen on the clothes-line resembled a troop of dreadful ghosts! Thy magic mysteries, O Youth, thy childish fears and pains, will never be forgotten.

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